Headquarters U.S. Air Force

I n t e g r i t y - S e r v i c e - E x c e l l e n c e

Contracting Systems Administrator Community of Practice Pilot

Description and Implementation Plan

Col (s) Kurt A. Stonerock

Chief, Contracting Action Group

Deputy Assistant Secretary (Contracting)

Assistant Secretary (Acquisition)

17 June 2003

U.S. AIR FORCE

1
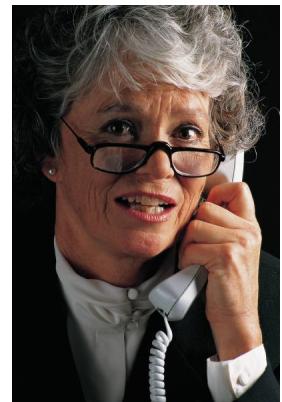
What the Research Was About:

Two Key Questions

GS-12 Buyer Japan

1. Are front-line personnel in our organization exchanging knowledge about successes, failures, ideas, and initiatives with their counterparts in other contracting organizations?

GS-13 PCO Virginia

2. To the extent they are not, why not?
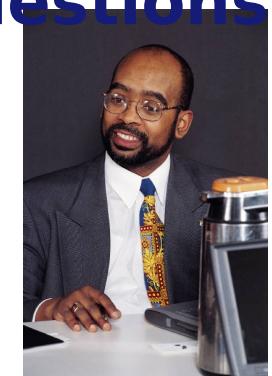
GS-9 Buyer Colorado

Deployed Contingency Contracting Officer

"**Transformation applies not just to what DoD does, but how it does it....Boundaries must be broken to accelerate change across the entire organization, promote cooperation, share information and best practices, and institutionalize change throughout the Department.**"

Quadrennial Defense Review, September 200
Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld

Industry on Knowledge Sharing:
Jack Welch's Perspective

"Taking everyone's best ideas and transferring them to others is the secret. There is nothing more important."
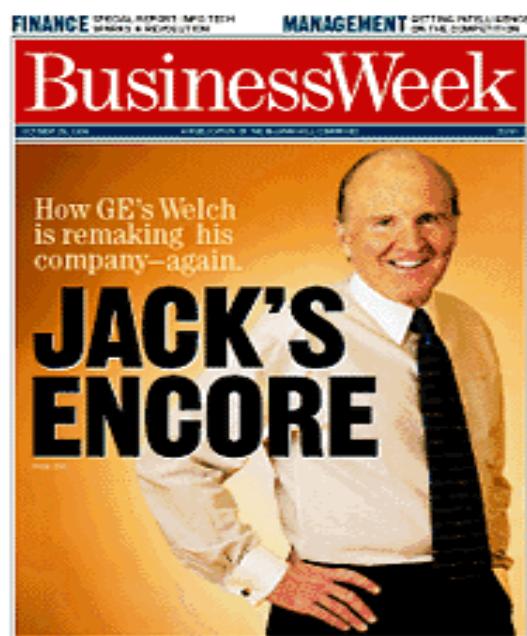
Straight From the Gut
Jack Welch, 2001

- Time savings from not needing to "re-create the wheel"

- Improved decisions from better access to viable alternatives

- Better access to pockets of unique, or one-time, experience

U.S. AIR FORCE

- Joint research sponsored by AT&L (Ms. Lee)
  - Co-sponsored by heads of Army, Navy and Air Force contracting (Mr. Inman, RDML Cowley, and BGen Scott)
  - The research won NDU's 2002 President's Strategic Vision Award
  - Dissertation-quality (doctorate awarded on 14 Mar 03 from Auburn University)

- 79 DoD contracting orgs, 600 personnel surveyed: 524 responses
  - 34 installation-level and 45 systems-level contracting organizations
    - Randomly-generated CONUS contracting organizations
    - Randomly-generated ("front-line" only) respondents within those organizations
      - Anonymity promised to respondents
  - Survey findings statistically valid to a 95% confidence level

- 23 Air Force contracting orgs 200 personnel surveyed: 175 responses
  - 8 installation-level and 15 systems-level Air Force contracting organizations

9 Out of 10 Front-Line Contracting Professionals See a Lot of Benefit in Seeking/Sharing Ideas with Their Counterparts in Other Orgs

U.S. AIR FORCE

Army = Green
Navy = Red
Air Force = Blue
DoD-wide = Black

PERCENTAGE

AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

91%

100		
90		
80		
70		
60		
50		
40		
30		
20	90%	93%	92%
10		
0	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE
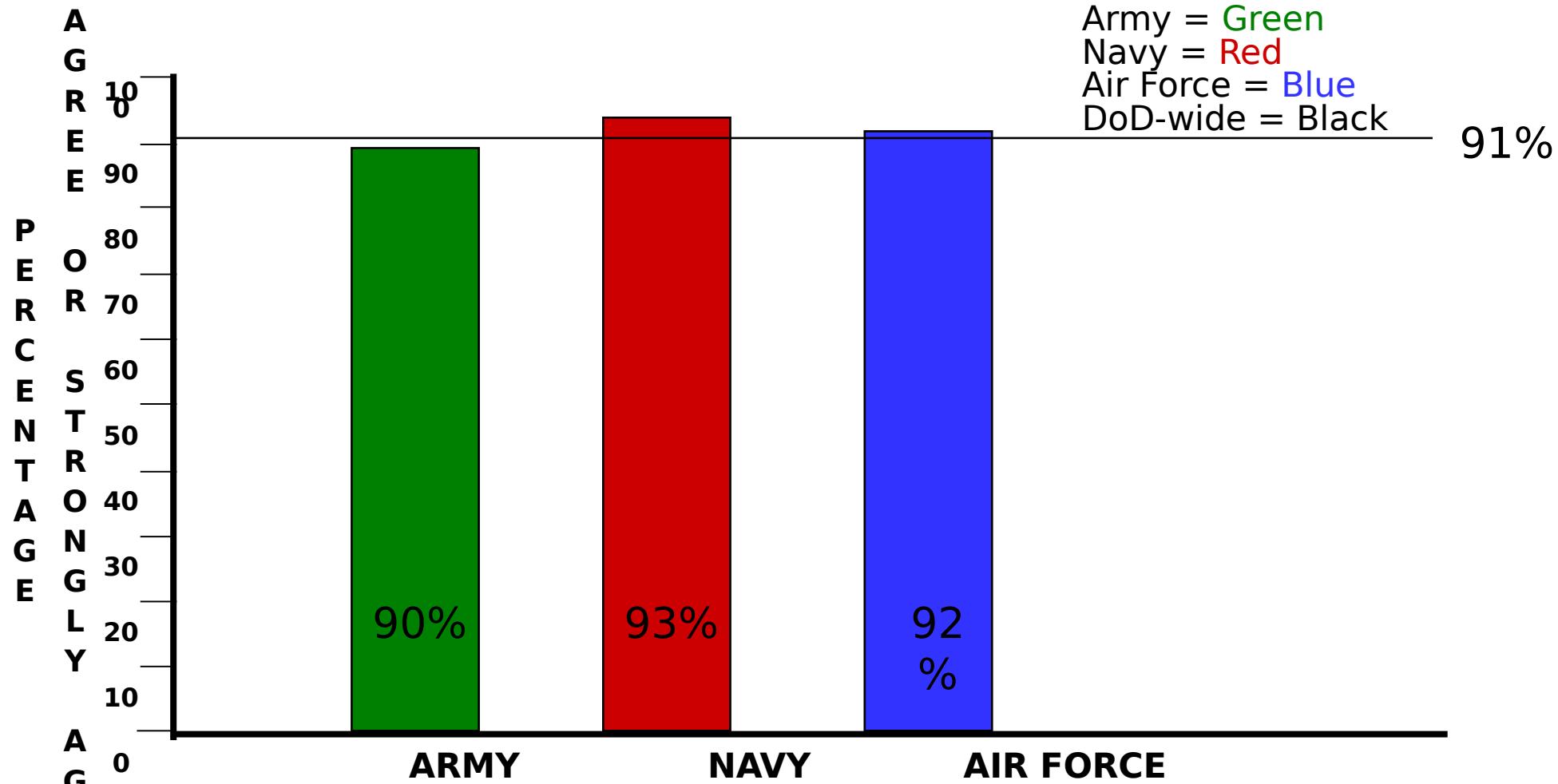
"For non-routine issues, I think there's a lot of value in contracting personnel from different contracting orgs exchanging ideas, initiatives, & lessons learned."

Frequency Analysis of single survey question, statistical confidence level of 95%

Integrity - Service - Excellence

9 Out of 10 Front-Line Contracting Professionals Would Like to Have Access to Contact Information of Counterparts Working Similar Issues

U.S. AIR FORCE

Army = Green
Navy = Red
Air Force = Blue
DoD-wide = Black

A G R E E O R S T R O N G L Y A G R E E

P E R C E N T A G E

91%
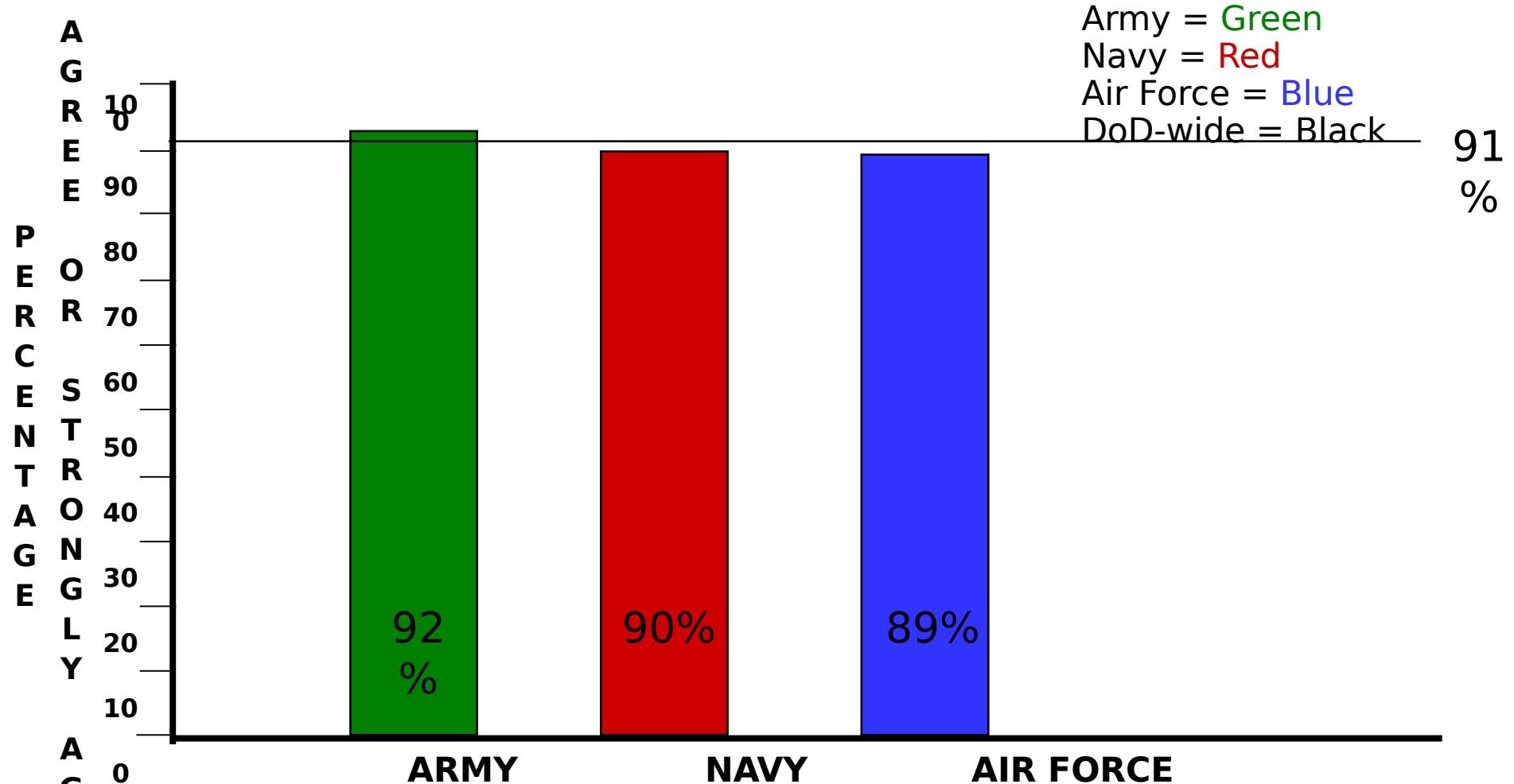
100			
90			
80			
70			
60			
50			
40			
30			
20	92%	90%	89%
10			
0	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE

"I'd like to have access to names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of contracting people in other orgs who've recently worked issues/types of contracts similar to mine."

Frequency Analysis of single survey question, 524 respondents, statistical confidence level of 95%

Integrity - Service - Excellence

8

6 Out of 10 Front-Line Contracting Professionals Do Not Find "Best Practice" Web Sites to be Very Helpful (6 out of 10 also said they didn't frequently use such sites)

U.S. AIR FORCE

Army = Green
Navy = Red
Air Force = Blue
DoD-wide = Black
Military Respondents = Brown
Respondents with less than 5 years contracting experience = Orange

PERCENTAGE AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

100	
90	
80	
70	
60	
50	
40	—40%
30	
20	
10	
0	

ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	MILITARY
40%	39%	39%	30% (Military) / 30% (< 5 YRS)

< 5 YRS

"I've found "contracting best practice" web sites to be very helpful."

Integrity - Service - Excellence

9
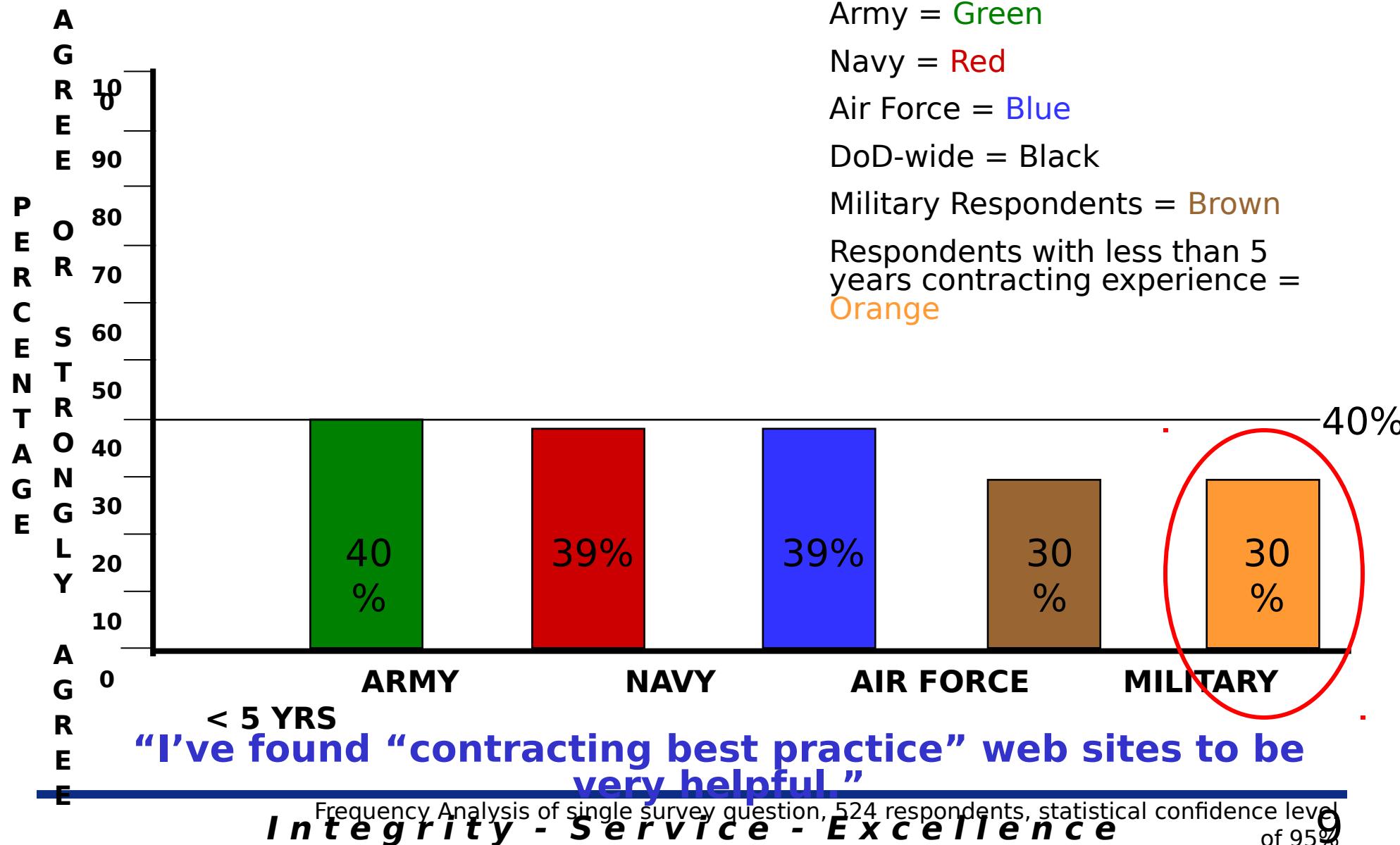
Does Your Organization Encourage You to Seek out Inter-Organizational Knowledge?
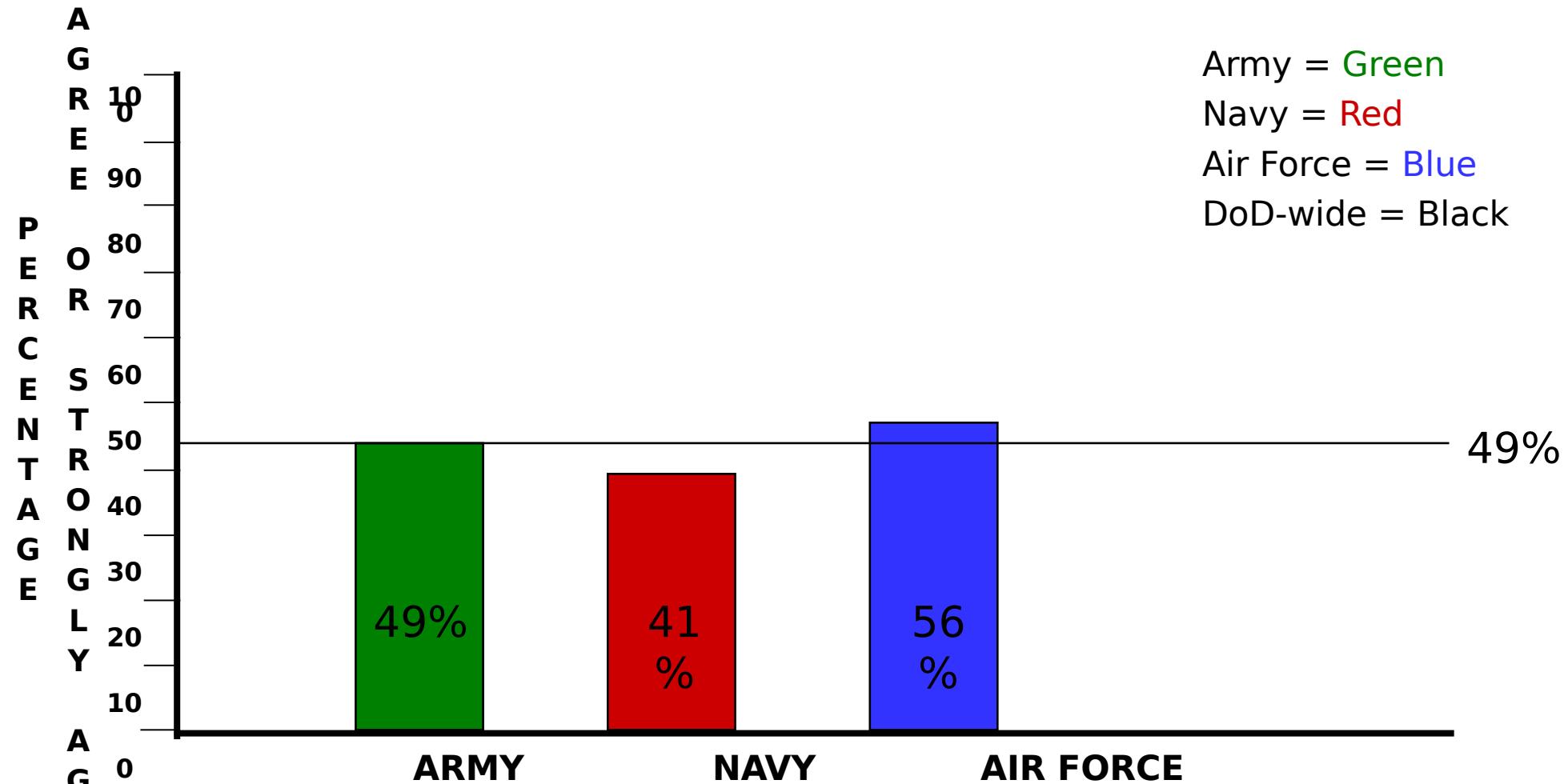
U.S. AIR FORCE

Army = Green
Navy = Red
Air Force = Blue
DoD-wide = Black

49%

PERCENTAGE AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

ARMY 49%

NAVY 41%

AIR FORCE 56%

"My organization encourages me to seek out and apply initiatives or best practices from other contracting organizations in my own work."

Frequency Analysis of single survey question, 524 respondents, statistical confidence level of 95%

Integrity - Service - Excellence

10

1 Out of 4 Front-Line Contracting Professionals Perceive They Do Not Work in an Organizational Climate that Encourages Them to Seek/Apply Ideas from Other Orgs

U.S. AIR FORCE

Army = Green
Navy = Red
Air Force = Blue
DoD-wide = Black

PERCENTAGE

DISAGREE/ STRONGLY DISAGREE

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

26%

ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE
25%	34%	22%

"My organization encourages me to seek out and apply initiatives or best practices from other contracting organizations in my own work."

Frequency Analysis of single survey question, 524 respondents, statistical confidence level of 95%

Integrity - Service - Excellence

11

"Lack of Quick/Convenient Access" is the Greatest Impediment to Seeking/Sharing Knowledge Among Contracting Professionals (Then "Lack of Perceived Need" to Share...and Then "Lack of Time")

Army (Time) = Green   Army (Access) = Striped Green   Army (Need) = Dotted G
Navy (Time) = Red   Navy (Access) = Striped Red   Navy (Need) = Dotted Re
Air Force (Time) = Blue   Air Force (Access) = Striped Blue   Air Force (Need) = Dotte
DoD-wide (Time) = Black   DoD-wide (Access) = Brown   DoD-wide (Need) = Oran

Y-axis: VARIABLE STRENGTH OF IMPEDIMENT

Values: .4, .3, .2, .1, 0

Reference lines: .37, .25, .25

ARMY:
- .21 — Time
- .33 — Access
- .26 — Need

NAVY:
- .19 — Time
- .36 — Access
- .22 — Need

AIR FORCE:
- .23 — Time
- .45 — Access
- .25 — Need

Results of Multiple Regression of survey data, statistical confidence level of 9

Services

Commands

DoD-Wide
Streamlined, Functional Communities of Practice

Lesson Learned →

Post A SPO C		Depot B	Sys Adm CCOs	Small Bus	
Depot D Base F	Lab E	Training Module	?	?	?
			?	?	
SPO G	Lab H	?	?		

U.S. AIR FORCE

A Member of the "Systems Administration" Streamlined, Functional Community of Practice

Give me names and phone numbers of peers who have deployed Wide Area Workflow!

A Member of the "Systems Administration" Streamlined, Functional Community of Practice

U.S. AIR FORCE

Give me names and phone numbers of peers who have deployed Wide Area Workflow!

Give me a listing of SPS training programs other contracting organizations are successfully using!

A Member of the "Systems Administration" Streamlined, Functional Community of Practice

U.S. AIR FORCE

Give me names and phone numbers of peers who have deployed Wide Area Workflow!

Give me a listing of SPS training programs other contracting organizations are successfully using!

Interesting! I just received an alert e-mail about a "Distance Learning Classroom" Incirlik has developed!

A Member of the "Systems Administration" Streamlined, Functional Community of Practice

U.S. AIR FORCE

GS-12 Texas

GS-13 PCO Virginia

A glimpse inside the "Construction" Streamlined, Functional Community of Practice

GS-9 Buyer Colorado

Deployed Contingency Contracting Officer

U.S. AIR FORCE

Systems Admin Texas

Another glimpse inside the "Systems Administration" Streamlined Community of Practice

Systems Admin Turkey

U.S. AIR FORCE

Systems Admin Texas

"Hi Sue! We've never met but I'm your counterpart here at Lackland.

I saw you have an initiative there concerning a new tape back up system?

Could you tell me a little more about that?"

Systems Admin Turkey

PCO and Buyers Virginia

?

"This is our first utilities privatization effort here and we don't want to recreate the wheel or do it wrong.

Who's done one of these recently?"

Streamlined, Functional Communities of Practice:
Quick/Convenient Access to Local Pockets of Unique Expertise

**PCO and Buyers
Virginia**

"Hi Robert!

Thanks for offering to share your experience with us!"

**Robert Jones
Alaska
        (PCO who recently completed   a utilities
        privatization)**

U.S. AIR FORCE

Contracting Systems Administrators
- Pilot will link front-line Air Force Contracting Systems Administrators in a streamlined, functional community of practice
- Army, Navy, and Marine Corps can participate in this pilot as desired

Contingency Contracting Officers
- Pilot will link front-line Air Force Contingency Contracting Officers in a streamlined, functional community of practice
- Army, Navy, and Marine Corps can participate in this pilot as desired

Small Business Specialists
- Pilot will link full or part time, front-line Air Force Small Business Specialists in a streamlined, functional community of practice
- Army, Navy, and Marine Corps can participate in this pilot as desired

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Policy and Formal Training

?
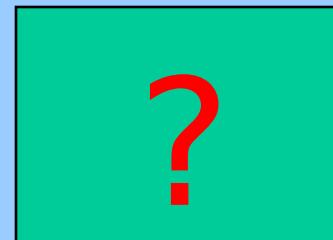
Does anybody know...?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

Focus is to provide a convenient means for front-line professionals working in a similar functional area to exchange ideas (e.g., not a library of "approved" information).
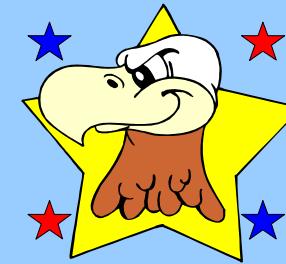
This is working great here!

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Only personnel working in a given community are given "membership" into that community's network.
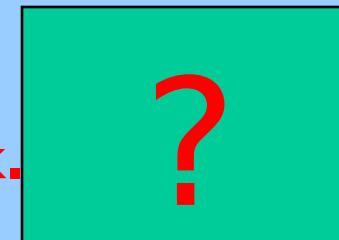
?

Policy and Formal Training

Does anybody know…?

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

HQ or commands can post policy and formal training references here (but no "templates" or command-sponsored "best practices").
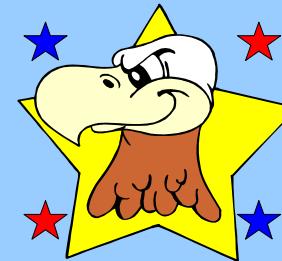
Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know…?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

A brief registration form on each member enables others to quickly gain contact info on peers with likely experience on a given issue.
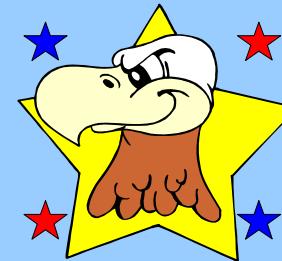
Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Experience forms can be easily updated as members gain new experiences or move to new jobs.

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Members can ask questions of one or more peers they've identified as likely having worked a similar issue.

?

Policy and Formal Training
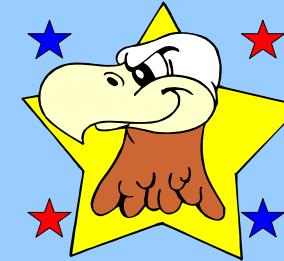
Does anybody know...?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Members can "turn off" their receipt of these   e-mailed questions

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Members can post their lessons learned, or locally-developed initiatives working great at their location. Their peers can quickly search this database.

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?

Who might have worked this issue?
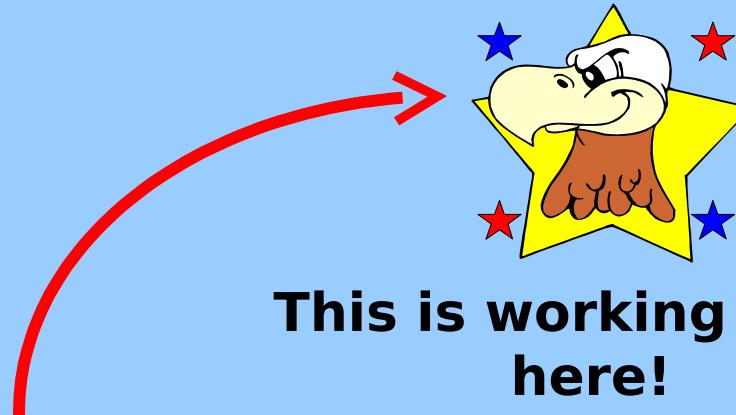
This is working great here!

All postings have a posting date, name, phone, and e-mail contact info.

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Members can set their computers to receive "alert" e-mails when new items are posted.
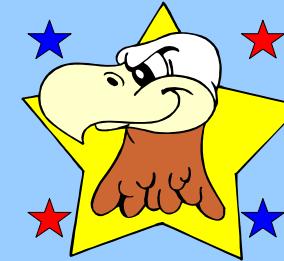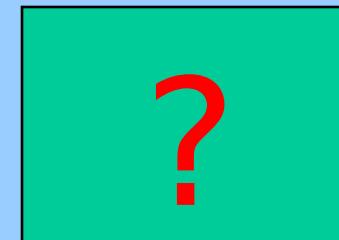
Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Site would also support "threaded discussions" and other functions (<u>if</u> and <u>when</u> a community wanted those added functions).
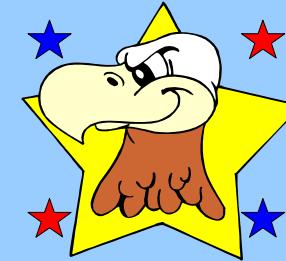
?

Policy and Formal Training

Does anybody know...?

Streamlined, Functional Communities of Practice:
Retaining Quality Without "Pre-Approval" of Site Postings

GS-12 Buyer Japan

GS-13 PCO Virginia

What if she unintentionally posts bad info?
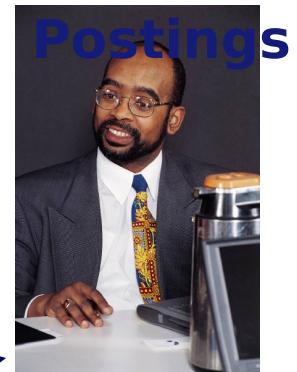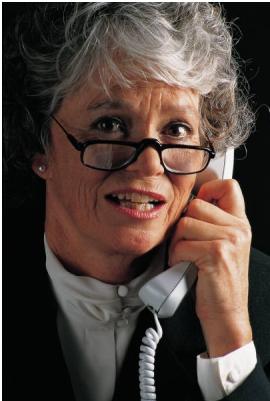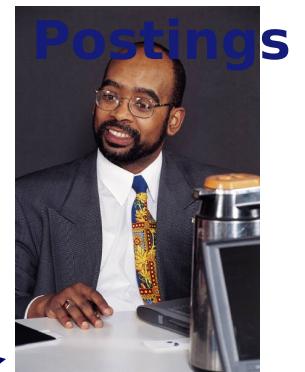
GS-11 Buyer California

GS-9 Buyer Colorado

Deployed Contingency Contracting Officer

Governance Rules for items posted on the site:

✓ **It is a member's responsibility to ensure their use of any posted item aligns with their own organization/command policy**

✓ **Items over a defined age will either be re-validated or deleted**

✓ **Key word "quality tags" can be tied to a posting (e.g., "PEO/SV approved PWS")**

✓ **Designated ombudsman arbitrates if a member insists an item be pulled ~~~ udsman does not "approve" posting**

GS-12 Buyer
Japan

GS-13 PCO
Virginia

GS-11 Buyer
California

What if she unintentionally posts bad info?

GS-9 Buyer
Colorado

Deployed Contingency Contracting Officer

Governance Rules for items posted on the site:

✓ It is a member's responsibility to ensure their use of any posted item aligns with their own organization/command policy

✓ Items over a defined age will either be re-validated or deleted

✓ Key word "quality tags" can be tied to a posting (e.g., "PEO/SV approved PWS")

✓ Designated ombudsman arbitrates if a member insists an item be pulled... but ombudsman does not "approve" posting

GS-12 Buyer Japan

GS-13 PCO Virginia

GS-11 Buyer California

What if she unintentionally posts bad info?

GS-9 Buyer Colorado

Deployed Contingency Contracting Officer

Organizational Dynamics:

✓ Members are very likely to be careful to ensure their postings to their peers are indeed valid

✓ Discrete "self-policing" among members is very likely to naturally occur, and will be encouraged

U.S. AIR FORCE

- There are large, transformational benefits ready to be seized from inter-organizational knowledge sharing (industry examples)

U.S. AIR FORCE

- There are large, transformational benefits ready to be seized from inter-organizational knowledge sharing (industry examples)

- 91% of front-line DoD contracting professionals see a lot of value in inter-organizational knowledge sharing with their peers

  - Quick, easy access (<u>not</u> time) is the greatest impediment to their doing so

  - "Perceived need" is also a greater impediment than time

U.S. AIR FORCE

- There are large, transformational benefits ready to be seized from inter-organizational knowledge sharing (industry examples)

- 91% of front-line DoD contracting professionals see a lot of value in inter-organizational knowledge sharing with their peers

  - Quick, easy access (<u>not</u> time) is the greatest impediment to their doing so

  - "Perceived need" is also a greater impediment than time

- Keep piloted "community of practice" features streamlined

  - Focus only on connecting people-to-people, for tacit knowledge sharing

- There are large, transformational benefits ready to be seized from inter-organizational knowledge sharing (industry examples)

- 91% of front-line contracting professionals see a lot of value in inter-organizational knowledge sharing with their peers

  - Quick, easy access (<u>not</u> time) is the greatest impediment to their doing so

  - "Perceived need" is also a greater impediment than time

- Keep piloted "community of practice" features streamlined

  - Focus only on connecting people-to-people, for tacit knowledge sharing

- Send consistent, clear message to front-line personnel that inter-organizational knowledge sharing is: part of our culture, expected, valued, and will be rewarded

U.S. AIR FORCE

- There are large, transformational benefits ready to be seized from inter-organizational knowledge sharing (industry examples)

- 91% of front-line contracting professionals see a lot of value in inter-organizational knowledge sharing with their peers

  - Quick, easy access (<u>not</u> time) is the greatest impediment to their doing so

  - "Perceived need" is also a greater impediment than time

- Keep piloted "community of practice" features streamlined

  - Focus only on connecting people-to-people, for tacit knowledge

The effort will largely fail unless all levels of leadership, down to first-line supervision, are champions of inter-organizational knowledge sharing.

Integrity - Service - Excellence

culture, expected, valued, and will be rewarded

Pilot Implementation Tasks: Top Level View*

U.S. AIR FORCE

Design

Populate

Launch

Encourage

Assess

* **Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and DAU pilot involvement would be consistent with the following:**

✓ **Pilot the "streamlined site design" indicated by the research findings**

✓ **Follow this implementation plan to maximize value of the pilots, and to ensure proper governance**

✓ **Community members can conduct inter-service searches of postings, but those postings**

Pilot Implementation Tasks:

Design **Phase**
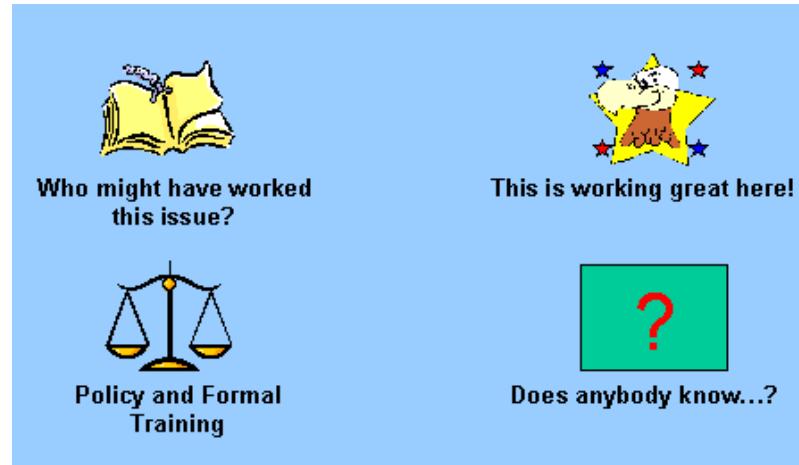
Goal: Tailor the functions of pilot site, aligning them with unique community needs

- ▪ Define desired search field categories for the two top functions (above)

- ▪ Design each community's 5-minute "member registration/experience survey"

Field Support Needed: Approximately 1 man day per command, to think through and submit suggestions on each of the above two sub-bullets

Possible "Key Word" Search Fields:
Systems Administrator Pilot Site
(notional draft of these functions' search fields)

Who might have worked this issue?

- Alphabetical member listing
- Sort by member's service
- Air Force members only
- Navy members only
- Army members only
- Marine Corps members only
- Sort by member's command
- Sort by state/country member is in
- Base level members
- MAJCOM level members
- Help Desk-AFCIS/USAF AMS Spt Team
- Technical Administrators
- Functional Administrators
- **?**

### This is working great here!

- Training
  - Sysadmin training
  - User training
- Report/Query writing
- Customer integration
  - Customer training
  - Automating/Facilitating Customer Interface
- System Administration
  - Database administration
  - Hardware
  - Software
    - Operating systems/networks
    - Contract writing systems
    - Office automation
- "Quality tag" key words
- **?**
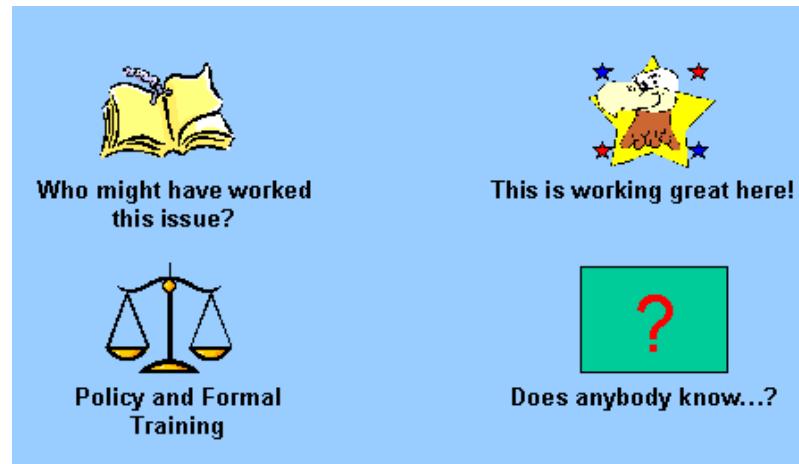
Goal: Maximum "pre-population" of each function prior to pilot launch (to create a good first impression with community members when they first see their site)

- Top-left function: Populate with "member registration/experience survey" data of projected community members (data gathered via tasker requesting member survey completion)

- Top-right function: HQ & command brainstorming of annual award submittal write-ups, etc. to identify good existing initiatives to post in this function's search field categories

- Bottom-left function: HQ & command brainstorming of what "handy reference" policy, operating guides, DAU/service formal training modules, to post

Field Support Needed: Approximately 3 man days per command to solicit/collect/submit the "5-minute registration" results from their field units, and to brainstorm/collect/submit "existing local initiative

Integrity – Service – Excellence

50

Pilot Implementation Tasks:

U.S. AIR FORCE

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know…?
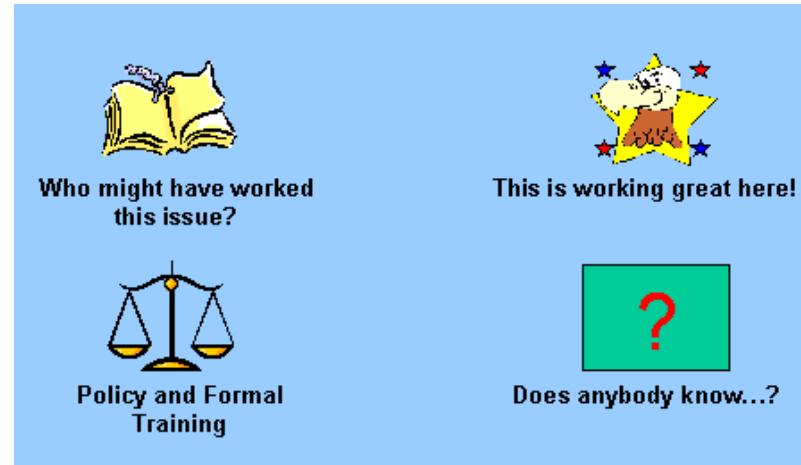
Goal: Maximum "pre-population" of each function prior to pilot launch (to create a good first impression with community members when they first see their site)

- Top-left function: Populate with "member registration/experience survey" data of projected community members (data gathered via tasker from each command)

- Top-right function: HQ & command brainstorming of 1206 award submittal write-ups, etc. to identify existing initiatives to post in this function's search field

- Bottom-left function: HQ & command brainstorming of what "handy reference" policy, operating guides, DAU/service formal training modules, to post

Field Support Needed: Approximately 3 man days per command in May 03 to solicit/collect/submit the "5-minute registration" results from their field units, and to brainstorm/collect/submit "existing local initiative postings" from their field units

Integrity - Service - Excellence

51

1. Developed a comprehensive wing customer guide detailing the NAFI and the purchase request process. DSN: 460-4712

2. Developed a comprehensive squadron training program for SPS based upon personnel trends and problems, reduced errors by 75%. DSN: 460-4712

3. Developed a training teaming approach with customers, reducing NAFI and MILSTRIP errors by 90%. DSN: 460-4712

4. Developed a "standardized supplemental guide for all buyers working with SPS software" greatly facilitating mandatory use of CONOPS. DSN: 460-4712

5. Developed means to afford customers "remote access to SPS via ad hoc reporting tool." DSN: 460-4712

6. Developed squadron training for "internet past performance collection tool." DSN: 460-4712

7. Developed a "workable IDIQ/CLIN format" that improved accuracy. DSN: 460-4712

8. Developed an expertise in quickly using CONWRITE to fix the "bugs" in critical OEF contracts. DSN: 460-4712

9. Developed a CONWRITE training program for new buyers. DSN: 460-4712

10. Developed an "electronic purchase request log located on a shared drive that allows for common access." Provides real-time status updates and ensures timely obligation of fiscal year-end funds. DSN: 632-2896

11. Developed a "monthly inquiries in Integrity tool to remind contract administrators of all required DD 350s." Initiative replaces BCAS function and ensures no money is lost in out-year budgets. DSN: 632-2896

(taken from 2002 AF Annual Award Submittals)

12. Developed an "on-line customer education/info center" placing everything customers need on the web. Puts wealth of information at customers' fingertips. Praise from local unit's leadership, MAJCOM, and civilian contractors. DSN: 632-2896

13. Developed a paperless initiative to "put important contract status on LG's 'Looking Glass' web page" providing senior leadership real-time status on mission-essential contracts. DSN: 632-2896

14. Developed a "new tape backup system for SPS server" cutting system downtime by over 50%. DSN: (314) 676-8070

15. Developed an "on-line training page" on contracting squadron's Intranet home page. DSN: (314) 676-8070

16. Developed a squadron "distance learning classroom," to include a data base to track classroom usage. DSN: (314) 676-8070

17. Developed "innovative tracking system for end of year purchase requests." DSN: 493-5464

18. Developed a "revamped PR control process" that increased squadron's first time PR approval rate by 60%. DSN: (315) 634-1828

U.S. AIR FORCE
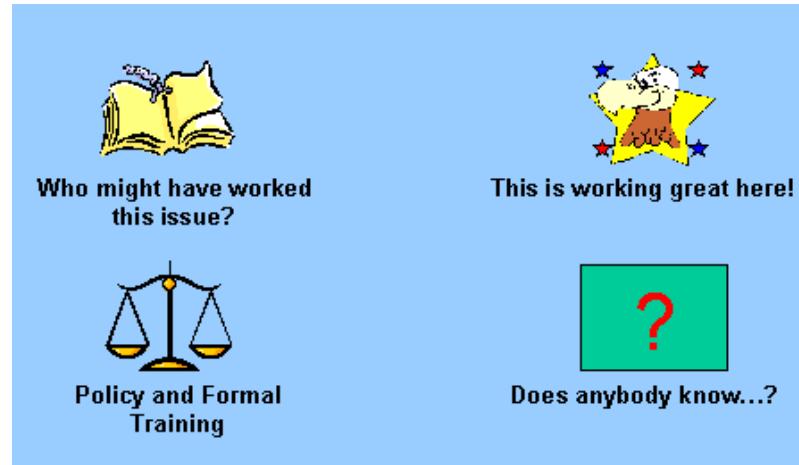
Goal: Provide each community member 20 minutes of "personalized, kick-off" training on the functionality of each of their site's functions, and "community rules"

- A concise training module will be provided (on how to load the community site on a member's computer, how to use each of the site's functions, and a few "community rules" for using the site)

- This training should be provided by a person in the new member's chain of command (to demonstrate that chain's support of the member's use of the site to seek and share ideas with other organizations)

- Goal will be to simultaneously train all new community members for a given site within a 2 week period, so that those new members will see an active site of their peers right away

Field Support Needed: Two man hours per local unit, to familiarize themselves with the training module and actually train the community

Pilot Implementation Tasks:

Encourage Phase

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know...?
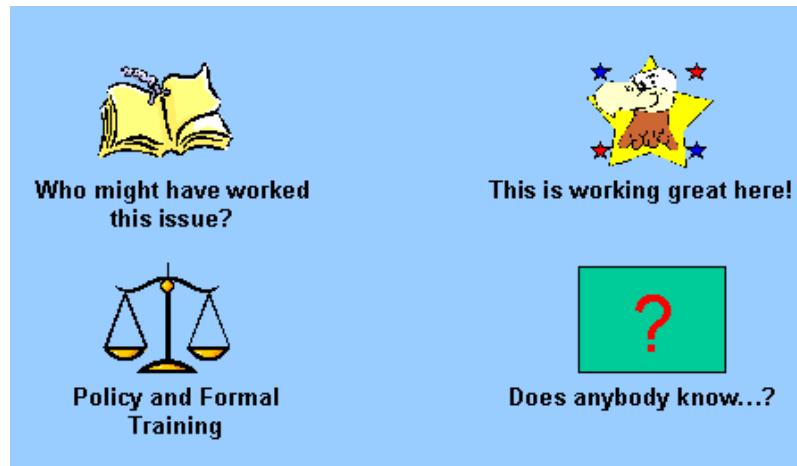
<u>Goal</u>: Low-key encouragement of site use during the pilot

- Periodic, informal, very low-key encouragement of a member's use of the site by their chain of command

  - To include their encouraging the member to post their good initiatives to the site

<u>Field Support Needed</u>: Very nominal. As little as a casual mention every few weeks to the member, to reinforce the local chain of command's support of the member's use of the site, and the chain's perception of the value of   inter-organizational knowledge sharing.

Pilot Implementation Tasks:

Phase

Who might have worked this issue?

This is working great here!

Policy and Formal Training

?

Does anybody know…?
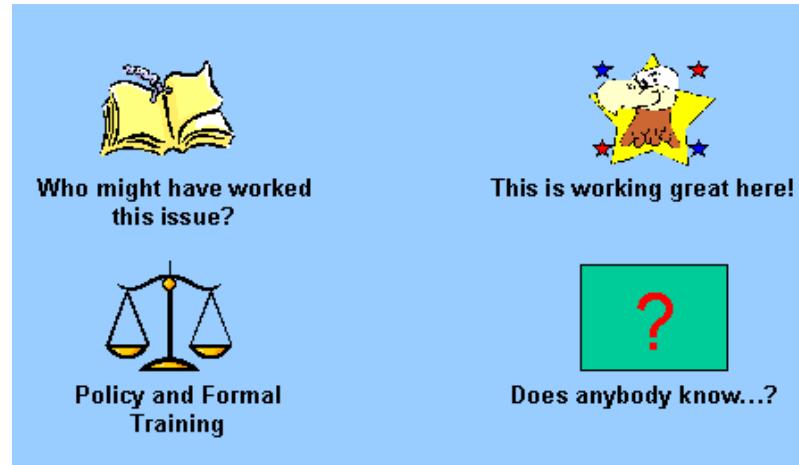
Goal: Gather data on the value of the pilot sites, toward a 1 year decision point

- ▪ HQ and commands might solicit very low-key, periodic feedback on how the pilots are going (for instance, perhaps via one or two informal, monthly phone calls to some community members or members of field unit leadership)

- ▪ Formal, random surveys of samplings of both community members and leadership will be conducted at each pilot's 6 and 12 month points

  - ▪ To seek out good and bad aspects of the pilot site, and identify improvement ideas

Field Support Needed: Very nominal. The 6 and 12 month formal assessments will be conducted via surveys sent out from HQ to randomly-generated persons

Pilot Implementation Status:
(AF status only, all three pilots, as of 6 Jun 03)

U.S. AIR FORCE

Legend:
- = *Design phase* (blue)
- = *Populate phase* (green)
- = *Launch phase* (yellow)
- = *Encourage phase* (red)
- = *Assess phase* (magenta)

Define "search fields"

Build & pre-populate each site

Build 5 min surveys

Do surveys

Gather "pre-populate" initiatives

Gather policy & training

Build kick-off training module

Define governance rules

Launch *

* *"Spiral in" the launch of other services' desired participation in any of the pilots, tailoring search function categories to meet their needs and retaining "by service" search capability of posted information.*

Low-key leadership encouragement to use site/post ideas

On-going feedback on good/bad aspects

6 Mo Survey

May Apr / Jun May / Jul / Aug / Sep / Oct / Nov / Dec / Jan / Feb / Mar

2003/2004

Headquarters U.S. Air Force

Integrity - Service - Excellence

Questions?

U.S. AIR FORCE